

DDC a Stakeholder in DLA Corporate Intern Program

On October 1, 2001 the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) selected eight people from the DLA Corporate Intern Program (CIP) to enroll in the DDC three-year General Supply Program. DDC has long been supportive of the DLA CIP, recognizing it as a value-added program providing opportunity to individuals and continuous replenishment of the workforce.

The eight General Supply Specialists are part of the DDC Logistics Operations Directorate. Through classroom and rotational training in the Directorate's primary business areas of Transportation, Stock Positioning, Supply Management, Inventory, Packaging, Storage Management, and Customer Support, each intern is receiving valuable information and a greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities of these business areas.



CDR Ted Olson, SC, USN, DDSP, provides DLA interns from DSCC and DCSR an operational tour of the Eastern Distribution Center, the largest Department of Defense distribution facility.

Each entered the program for personal reasons but their goals were similar.

"I served with the United States Air Force for 22 years," said DDC Intern Richard Davenport, "and I wanted to continue working with the Armed Forces because I understand their needs and the opportunities in the DLA Internship program are outstanding."

"I wanted the opportunity to learn and work in different aspects of the distribution process," Brian Hatcher said. I wanted to include transportation, inventory, storage, receiving . . . everything."

Wes Bair really wanted something different. "After working for the government for 20 years as a wage grade employee. I wanted to do something new and challenging. The CIP has been that and more."

Concetta Mitchell and Stephen Gentry wanted challenges too, but they also wanted to give back. "I wanted to share the knowledge I previously obtained as well as learn more."

"I wanted a job that would be more challenging," Gentry said, "and one where my opinion could be heard!"

Each intern was assigned to a distribution center to receive hands-on training for a period of six months in receiving, storage, inventory, and transportation areas. For each DDC intern, the training at a distribution center has proved to be vital in learning the operational processes for physical distribution.

"I applied to the Intern Program because I wanted a challenge, something to enhance my career goals," Ernie Green said, "and I got it. One of the best parts and most challenging aspect has been, being allowed to be part of the many teams and to showcase my talents and abilities and to fit in anywhere I'm placed."

The best part according to Davenport has been the rotation at the Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, Pennsylvania's (DDSP) Eastern Distribution Center (EDC).

Even the challenges have been cherished. "The Intern program differs from other training programs in that it's a living, breathing training plan," Roxanne Gabel said. "Sure there are schools we need to attend, but the actual LEARNING is more of a student/mentor relationship with some really wonderful team members at DDC. Because the requirements to support DDC's mission are constantly changing, so is our one-on-one training."

"Every six months we rotate to a different Division within the Logistics Operations Directorate which is challenging," Hatcher said. "You get accustomed to one team you have to move to another. But that's also interesting - I never stop learning."

"My past work assignment at DDRV (Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, VA) working with Roxanne Gabel to resolve several issues pertaining to Hurricane Isabel has been the most



DDC Supply Intern Wesley Bair, Jr. discusses the DDC Intern Program with visiting interns from DSCC and DCSR.

challenging job yet,” Gentry said. “It’s just another example of the diversity and teamwork of the interns and the whole DLA team – it’s an exciting program.”



DDC Supply Interns David Harris and Richard Davenport answer questions following their presentation on the DDC Supply Intern Program with visiting interns from Defense Supply Center Columbus, OH (DSCC) and Richmond, VA (DCSR).

“The best part about the program has been meeting people, traveling, learning about the government system that I never gave a second thought for, and the opportunity to achieve goals that I once thought was unattainable,” Bair said.

For Gabel it’s the people. “Not just friendships, but a few real mentors and some of the staff who take such pride in their work that they can’t help but share how they do their job, and how to do it well.”

Similarly for Green, the people have made the difference. “I love the travel and meeting people but more importantly, I get to see how they became successful. I can take notes, follow in their footsteps and I can be successful as well. I retired from the U.S. Navy after 20 great years and this program is a perfect compliment to my career.”

“The best experiences of this program for me has been meeting people in the different sections and warehouses,” David Harris said, “and their willingness to share their knowledge with me.”

“It’s been challenging to learn all the areas of responsibility and learn time management at the same time,” Mitchell said.

“But at the same time it’s been rewarding to meet so many people that will share their knowledge.”

Every intern would recommend the program to friends. “I regularly e-mail my former classmates when I see another intern class announcement posted,” said Harris. “I recommend this program to my friends all the time.”

“I didn’t realize until I came to DDC how many internships are available through DLA,” said Gabel. “DLA and DDC have been tremendously supportive of on the job training, degree completion programs, and receptive to our ideas as we find training/programs we’d like to learn more about. The networking opportunities are amazing. I’ve now got not only contacts but friends at DDC plus all of the DLA Supply Centers, and several of the Distribution Depots.”

“For many years I thought that programs like the intern program had passed me by,” said Wes Bair. “I was hoping a program like this would open up. Everyday employees who I worked with at the DDSP ask me how they can get into the same type of program and I am happy to tell all about this program. The CIP affords many like myself just that opportunity.”

What does the future hold for these interns? “I’ve had the advantage of working at the ICP-level for ammunition, then moving to DLA,” said Gabel. “The cultural shift is like moving from an intimate little mom and pop store to a super-center like WalMart or Cosco. I hope to take advantage of what I learned from the Navy, plus what I’m learning from DLA in wherever the future leads me. I can’t say I’ll be managing this program, but I can say I’ll almost certainly be continuing to serve DoD in an area that continues to let me grow.”

“In ten years I hope to see myself in serious contention for the SES training program,” Harris said.

“I hope I’m working as Management within DLA or one of the Individual Service Organizations,” Mitchell said. “The CIP has given me the opportunity to learn what the Organization expects of the workers and the mentoring of the management while in the program has given me the ambition to succeed.”

“I believe the intern program prepares individuals for lifelong careers with DLA or other government agencies,” Hatcher said.

“In the future I see myself in a position to help someone like me attain the same goals that I have,” Bair said. “I would love to help others attain this type of opportunity.”

“I firmly believe the CIP will serve as the foundation to a successful career,” Davenport said.

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